

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL NEEDS**

**SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM REPORT AND SUPPORT PLAN FOR
NEWPORT COUNTY REGIONAL**

MAY 7-23, 2001

SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM

Introduction

The purpose of the School Support System (SSS) is to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services for students with disabilities. The School Support System model is designed to promote the involvement of the whole school district, regular educators as well as special educators and parents. It is designed to learn if the district meets the minimum regulations and what effects the programs and services have on student performance. Finally, the SSS develops a support plan for training and technical assistance.

To accomplish this, the SSS includes these components:

- The Orientation Meeting The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) staff meets with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to plan the site visit and identify issues or initiatives that may influence programs or service delivery.
- Data Analysis Meeting The RIDE staff meets to review LEA demographic information on selected reports including: the LEA annual plan, census information, and information collected through record review, staff questionnaires and parent interviews. To ensure that the child is at the center of the study, all analyses begin with the child. Thus, a sample of approximately 30 students with disabilities is selected; the records of these students are reviewed; their parents, teachers and related service providers are interviewed, and their classrooms are observed. The result is an in-depth, unified examination of the actual provision of programs and services for students with disabilities. The RIDE staff compiles a preliminary summary of their analyses of these data.
- Presentation by the LEA and School Site Visit The site visit begins with a presentation of programs by teachers and staff. The presentation provides the visiting team with general and specific information on delivery of programs and services to students. Following this presentation, visits to all schools are made. The team members interview school administrators and teaching staff. Parents and central office staff are also interviewed. the team gathers sufficient information and works with the LEA personnel to generate a report covering the following:
 - The district's compliance with the state and federal regulations, relative to the education of students with disabilities
 - The quality and effectiveness of programs and services provided by the district
 - The need for professional development and technical assistance that will enable the LEA to improve programs and services.
- The Support Plan The RIDE team and the LEA central office and building administrators meet to review the data and complete a report of results. The group designs a professional development/technical assistance support plan with timelines for implementation. This plan enables the school and district to correct areas of non-compliance and to strengthen promising programs and correct areas of weakness in order to improve services and programs for all students.
- The SSS Report The report summarizes the findings from the various data sources. The format of the report uses four divisions: Indicators, Findings, Documentation, and Support Plan. Indicators describe either performance or compliance. Findings can include a variety of some fourteen categories, from school improvement to the least restrictive environment. The documentation section of the report distinguishes the source of the finding. The support plan reflects the response to the described findings. The support plan describes the corrective action required by the district as well as ways that RIDE will assist the district to improve programs and services.

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1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	<p>Throughout the region, there are many examples of exemplary district and school-based leadership, which has resulted in the implementation of school reform efforts that have benefited students and staff.</p> <p>The Middletown School District through their Strategic Plan is moving forward with school reform efforts in the areas of standards, curriculum, instruction and assessment. The district has leveraged a significant amount of funds to support comprehensive, ongoing professional development to all staff. Standards based instruction is visible and evident throughout the schools.</p> <p>The Tiverton School District has adopted standards and benchmarks for the core curriculum areas. Teams of teachers are working on aligning the district curriculum with the standards.</p> <p>Portsmouth School District is currently focused on decentralized decision-making and school based ownership. The district Strategic Plan supports strategies to implement the School Improvement Plans.</p> <p>Little Compton's Strategic Plan is focused on closing the gaps in student achievement through strategies including standards-based curriculum, performance-based assessment, professional development and community involvement.</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Document Review</p>	
Performance	Every school has a School Improvement Team and a School Improvement Plan that is aligned with the District Strategic Plan. These teams consist of a variety of stakeholders, including parents and community representation.	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Document Review</p>	

2. SCHOOL CLIMATE

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	There is tremendous respect for the work of the Regional Special Education Administration. Schools expressed a need for more information, communication and support from the Regional Special Education Office.	Staff Interviews	<p>Additional special education personnel will be hired to support schools and by utilizing funds received through administrative billing from Medicaid.</p> <p>Timeline: January 2002</p>
Performance	Regional staff often times do not have access to some supports and services that district employees have access to within the same school building. (i.e., mentoring program, teacher support and evaluation, professional development)	Interview	<p>Principals will take a leadership role in assuring that all staff in the school building has access to these services and supports.</p> <p>Timeline: December 2001</p>
Performance	At most schools, general and special education teachers demonstrate collaborative working relationships in order to provide accommodations and modification in the classroom for students with special needs.	<p>Observation</p> <p>Interview</p>	

Performance	Opportunities for common planning time vary across schools. In some schools there are blocks of time that are structured especially to address student progress. In other schools, some periods have been extended to support this planning. In some schools these opportunities do not exist. There is a commitment by some teachers to meet through informal channels to address student needs. However, in order to support students in inclusion settings, co-planning among general education, special education and co-curricular teacher's needs to be scheduled at the school level.	Observation Interview	All stakeholders, including administrators, school improvement teams, union representatives and others will work together to consider opportunities to support common planning time in schools. Timeline: December 2001
Performance	The regional special education office provides schools with the list of new students a short period of time before the opening of school. This does not provide the necessary time for general and special education teachers to co-plan for students before school begins. This impacts service and program decisions along with opportunities to support integration. At times this can not be remedied based on the new students entering the community through group homes and the navy base.	Interview	The Regional Special Education Program will provide program lists to schools at the end of June for the upcoming school year with a finalized list before the end of summer. Timeline: December 2001
Performance	At Portsmouth High School, the Special Education Department does not have a department-chair, or department meeting representation at administrative meetings. However a guidance director has been added at the high school, with the responsibility of overseeing special education.	Interview	
Performance	Generally, the responsibility of the psychologists and social workers are limited to referrals and evaluations across a number of schools. This limits the availability of these professionals to work on behavioral issues and crisis intervention. The Alternative Education Program at Tiverton High School does not have a behavioral health component (i.e., psychological/psychiatric services, counseling, family communication, etc.)	Interview	Additional staff will be assigned to the Alternative Education Program to provide these components. Timeline: December 2001

3. GOOD TEACHING PRACTICES

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	Across the districts, general and special education teachers have full access to the standards based curriculum and materials.	Interview	
Performance	To ensure that students with disabilities have full access to high expectations and standards-based learning, accommodations and individual supports are being implemented and, in some schools, class size is kept below limits.	Interview Observation	
Performance	Reporting of student progress is being aligned with the standards-based curriculum in Middletown. A new standards-based report card has been drafted and will be implemented in September 2001. Plans are underway to extend this report card to the middle and high school levels.	Interview Document Review	
Performance	Implementation of standards based instruction in the classrooms is varied across the region. The opportunity for professional development through the district clearly impacts the level of implementation in the schools.	Interview	
Performance	Throughout the region, there were many examples of unique instructional initiatives that target students "at risk" for school failure and drop out. (E.g., Saturday Academy, Project Success, The Alternative Learning Program, summer programs, Alternative Education after school programs, tutorial support, Navy Fare Program, and many partnerships with community agencies such as the East Bay Career Academy, Bradley Hospital, Diploma Plus.)	Interview Observation	

Performance	Most schools throughout the region have made social and emotional learning a part of schools capacity. A variety of programs that create positive behavior supports, reduce risk factors, and manage crisis are underway in the schools. Examples include the Peer Helping Network at Tiverton High, Violence Prevention, Project Success, social skills training and crisis intervention training. School as Community at Elmhurst including activities such as Play Fair and COZ at Forest Avenue School,	Interview Observation	
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4. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OPTIONS

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	The region has a myriad of program options with a focus on implementing and supporting inclusionary efforts throughout the majority of schools.	Interview Observation	
Performance	Students with disabilities are included as genuine members and integrated learners in the schools across the region.	Interview Observation	
Performance	Program options for special education students vary across schools. Because of this, students are forced to move to different schools to receive their education. For some students, they transitioned to three different elementary schools within four years.	Interview	The Regional Special Education Program will continue to create program alternatives in each of the districts, thereby limiting the numbers of transitions for special education students. This coming years, four additional program options are being created through the districts. Timeline: December 2001

5. TEACHER SUPPORT TEAM (TST)

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	There are active, functioning teacher support teams across most schools in the region. However, some staff are unclear about the roles and responsibilities of the TST. Data from TST often was not used as part of the school's self study process. The TST is being used as a special education pre-referral process. At some schools staff were unaware that students could be referred directly to special education	Interview	A manual describing special education policies and procedures will be develop and disseminated to schools across the region. Timeline: December 2001
Performance	There were no TSTs at Tiverton or Portsmouth High Schools.	Interview	Tiverton High School and Portsmouth High School will develop and implement a Teacher Support Team. Timeline: November 2001

6. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Compliance	Special education procedures and processes differ across schools as a result of confusion and lack of information. This effects the full access of families and students to appropriate referrals, evaluation, IEP and	Interview	The Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that families and students have full access to all special education processes and services.

	service delivery and disciplinary practices.		A manual of all special education policies and procedures will be developed. Professional development will be provided to districts and schools. Timeline: December 2001
Compliance	The Newport Regional Early Childhood Team provides Child Outreach Screening to children enrolled in the Head Start Program and offers screening to three and four year old children in the Region during the Spring. The numbers of children screened in each community are significantly low (ie. Middletown 10%, Portsmouth 6%). More aggressive outreach and community collaborations with the early care and education community and pediatricians needs to occur in order to increase the number of children screened. At present the system has limited capacity to outreach and to screen additional children.	Interview	Middletown and Portsmouth School Districts will take a lead role in collaborating with the existing Child Outreach Team to increase the number of three and four-year-old children screened in the region. Timeline: January 2002
Compliance	The district needs to provide preschool children with special needs the opportunity to receive their special education services with typically developing age peers at Linden School.	Observation Interview	The Regional Special Education Program will explore options for providing a continuum of least restrictive environments for preschool children with special needs in compliance with the RI Special Education Regulations. Timeline: January 20002
Performance	Middletown High School provides an in school Restriction Program as an intervention to suspension for appropriate and eligible students. Contend area teachers provide instructional support to students during this time. Guidance counselors meet with students prior to returning to class for additional support and direction.	Observation Staff Interview Documentation	
Compliance	The classroom at Aquidneck School for Children with Severe Disabilities and the Alternative Education Program at Tiverton High School has an age range that exceeds four years. There are two self-contained classrooms at the Middletown High School that merges in the afternoon, which results in exceeding class size limits. At Hathaway School the resource teacher caseload has been consistently over 30 throughout the year. The district hired additional staff, however an individual could not be hired with appropriate qualifications	Interview Document Review	The Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that programs and services meet the requirements of the Rhode Island Special Education Regulations. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	At Portsmouth High School, students who receive an in-house suspension (Alternative Education) spend their time in the school alternate education program and complete work in that room. Students must rely on their own advocacy abilities to request assistance from special education teachers. Staff was unclear as to the policy for allowing these students to receive special education services while in-school suspension.	Staff Interviews	The Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that students will receive special education services documented in their IEPs. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	A student home due to surgery did not receive homebound instruction. The staff at Portsmouth Middle School were not aware of the need to provide this service.	Interview	The Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that eligible students will receive homebound instruction. Timeline: September 2001

7. FACILITIES

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Compliance	An evacuation plan needs to be developed and posted at the Aquidneck, Gaudet and Portsmouth Middle School for those students who are mobility impaired.	Observation Interview	Evacuation plans will be developed and posted at these schools. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	The speech pathologist at Linden School has space that is shared with a time-out room and is adjacent to the music room that does not have a door. The distraction in the space impedes student's ability to learn. The time-out room at Linden School is unsafe.	Observation Interview	Linden School will provide safe and appropriate space for students. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	The Gaudet Middle School administration empowers each cluster to schedule classes as to what works best within their cluster. This flexibility is seen as a positive aspect by the staff. It does, however, create some facility issues with regard to service delivery and confidentiality. <i>Room 136</i> was configured so it housed two special education classes. (divided horizontally by wall with a door) However, the fifth grade class in the back of the room had to walk through the sixth grade class in the front of the room to enter or exit the room thus interrupting service delivery. <i>Room 246</i> was divided vertically down the center with a partial wall. Each side of this divided room housed two special education teachers. For 1-2 periods a day both teachers occupied the same space at the same time on each side (two per side). Thus, four teachers were sharing one partially divided classroom, thus interrupting. Teachers often seek out unused classes when this situation occurred but had to spend time locating available rooms. The partial divide allows for students to hear what is occurring in the other classroom and for students in crisis confidentiality is an issue. <i>Room 208</i> is divided into four classes (2 resource, 2 title math classes). Three of the four are along the perimeter of the room with glass doors and walls with windows. The fourth class occupies the center right of the room. When students enter or exit the room, service delivery of students in other classes is interrupted. Due to the glass windows and doors, students can hear and see what is occurring in the other classes and for students in crisis, confidentiality is an issue.	Staff Interviews Observation	The Gaudet Middle School will provide appropriate space for students. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	Room 109 at Tiverton High School has a partial wall with a vocational technical classroom. This room was not conducive for meeting the needs of special education students.	Interview Observation	Tiverton High School will provide appropriate space for students. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	OT services at Pocasset, at times, are provided in the hallway.	Interview	Pocasset School will provide appropriate space for students. Timeline: September 2001

8. EVALUATION

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Compliance	<p>No team of qualified professionals evaluation report on file at time of initial referral</p> <p>A. No current evaluations on file</p> <p>B. No current educational evaluation on file</p> <p>C. No current psychological evaluation on file</p> <p>D. No current medical evaluation on file</p> <p>E. No current social history on file</p> <p>F. Evaluations not completed as part of initial evaluation</p> <p>G. Evaluation not done within timelines</p>	<p>JDS2; BG13,14,15 DK1,2,3</p> <p>JDS2; JK3,7,10; DA2,SW4 DK3 JK-1; DA4 ; BG14,15 (full</p> <p>DA4;SW4, DK1,2,3,5</p> <p>BG11,12</p> <p>SW4</p> <p>JDS2;JK14;DA2</p> <p>DA3;SW7</p>	<p>The Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that all steps in the evaluation process will be completed within required timelines.</p> <p>Timeline: December 2001</p>
Compliance	<p>The following people were not at the evaluation team meeting:</p> <p>A. Parent (no documentation on file to indicate parent was invited)</p> <p>B. General education teacher</p> <p>C. LEA representative at IEP meeting</p> <p>D. Other: Special Education Teacher</p>	<p>JDS2 BG13,14,15 BG12</p> <p>JDS1,3,4; BG11</p> <p>JK1,5,6,7</p> <p>JDS1; JK3,4 DK1,3,5</p>	<p>The Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that all evaluations include the appropriate team members.</p> <p>Timeline: December 2001</p>
Compliance	In Middletown Elementary Schools, the screening process utilized by the guidance counselors impedes or prohibits the referral of a child to special education. The use of a single evaluation tool in a gate-keeping role violates special education regulations that all referrals are sent directly to the evaluation team and parent within 10 school days.	Interview	<p>The Newport Regional Program will provide assurances that evaluation procedures to determine eligibility will comply with the Rhode Island Special Education Regulation.</p> <p>Timeline: September 2001</p>
Performance	A comprehensive occupational career assessment is provided for all ninth graders including students with disabilities. The process results in an inventory of individualized career goals. However, at the middle level and at the Alternative Learning Program, teachers and staff were unclear about the roles and responsibilities of the vocational assessment process.	Interview	<p>Professional Development will be provided to address these issues.</p> <p>Timeline: October 2001</p>
Compliance	Schools are unaware of how to refer students for adaptive physical education.	Interviews	<p>Professional Development will be provided to address these issues.</p> <p>Timeline: October 2001</p>

Performance	This is a process in place across the region to provide parents quarterly progress reports for children with IEPs. At Tiverton High School, general education teachers complete bi-weekly academic progress reports for students in special education. These reports are sent to the student's family.	Interview	
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9. IEP

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	
Performance	There is a strong commitment throughout the districts to align students' IEPs with performance and instruction standards.	Interview	
Compliance	Most recent IEP is not current.	JDS2,4; JK15; BG12,10; SW5,8,9,13; BG13 DK3,5	The Newport Regional Special Education Program will provide assurances that IEPs are developed and writing in compliance with the Rhode Island Special Education Regulations. Timeline: October 2001
Compliance	No general education teacher at IEP meeting.	JDS12,3 JK1,10,13; BG11,15	
Compliance	Description of student's strengths and needs is inadequately written.	JK4,11; DA2,3,4; BG14,10; SW5,11	
Compliance	Present levels of performance inadequately written.	JDS1,2,4; JK10; DA4; BG10,11,12,15; SW5	
Compliance	Annual goals inadequately written.	JDS1,3,4; KL3; JK10; DA4; BG10,11,12,13,14, 15; SW5,8	
Compliance	No documentation on the IEP of the discussion of the need for an extended school year services	JDS1,2,4; JK1,3,7,10,11; DA3,4,5; BG10,14,15; SW1,5,6,8,10,11,13 DK1,2,3,5	
Compliance	Description, location, provider, frequency, and duration of supplementary aids and services, including accommodations and modifications not adequately documented on IEP.	JDS1; JK1; DA2,3,4; BG11,12,13,14,15	
Compliance	No date for re-evaluation indicated on IEP.	JK1,3,7,10; DA4; BG15; SW1,2,3,5,8,10,11,16	
Compliance	Determination of time and extent of participation in general education and special education not present or calculated.	JDS2; JK1,10,11; BG15; SW5,9,11	
Compliance	At some schools an LEA representative is not present at the IEP meetings.	Interview	
Compliance	General education staff at Gaudet Middle School was unclear as to their ability to access a copy of IEP's for students they serve due to confidentiality issues.	Interviews	
Compliance	Extended school year services are not designed by the IEP team based on individual student needs. IEP teams determine student eligibility for extended school year services but the regional office determines the extended school year program to be offered.	Interviews	The Newport Regional Special Education Program will develop guidelines to empower the IEP to make decisions regarding individual student's extended year services and programs. Timeline: October 2001

Performance	The regional special education office develops the schedules for the majority of case conferences for some districts. Although the schools find this to be helpful, they are sent to schools shortly before the beginning of the month making it difficult for the schools to make necessary schedule adjustments. The scheduling needs to be done in a more timely way.	Interview	The Newport County Special Education Program will provide school this information in a timely way. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	IEP meetings for students receiving only speech/language services at some schools often are conducted with parents and speech pathologist and do not include a chair and teachers.	Interview	The Newport Regional Special Education Office will provide assurances that processes and procedures related to IEPs will be done in compliance with the RI Special Education Regulations. Timeline: September 2001
Compliance	The IEP's that are completed at Middletown's Alternate Learning Program are out of compliance with Federal/State regulations (See SW5, JK4)	Interviews Record Reviews	
Compliance	No vocational assessment (for students 14 years and older)	SW1,5,8,10,11,12,13 DA5	
Compliance	No transition plan (for students 16 years and older or beginning at 14 years if the team determines appropriate)	SDA5W13, DA5,JK3,DA5JK3,SW5	
Compliance	The IEP does not address the annual goals and objectives for: - Employment,post-secondaryeducation/training,independent living, and community participation.	SW5,8,10,11,12,13 DA5	
Compliance	Transition goals are not embedded throughout the IEP	SW5,10,12,13	

10. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	Across the districts, most schools are committed to integrating children with special needs into the general education classes and to providing accommodation and modifications to support each student's success.	Observation Interview	
Performance	The Newport Regional Early Childhood Team works collaboratively with community-based early care and education programs in order to provide preschool children with disabilities an opportunity to receive their education with typically developing age peers.	Interview	
Performance	The Intensive Resource Classroom at Aquidneck School consists of students from grades 1-4. This range of grades makes it difficult for the special education teacher to collaborate with general education teachers and to provide necessary support and therefore limits the opportunities for these students to be integrated	Observation Interview	
Performance	At several schools there are a number of examples of team teaching and staff collaboration to implement and support inclusion experiences resulting in creative options in the least restrictive environment. This practice should be expanded across the region.	Observation Interview	
Performance	At a few schools more traditional pullout services and limited collaboration persists which tends to limit options considered for students.	Observation Interview	The Newport County Regional Program will provide assurances that a full continuum of services are available to meeting the needs of students with IEPs. Timeline: September 2001

Performance	Students being tested or receiving special education services in the core curricula are pulled from co-curricula as a school-wide practice at Tiverton Middle School, impacting student's participation.	Observation Interview	The Newport County Regional Program will provide assurances that individual needs and interests are considered when scheduling special education services. Timeline: September 2001
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11. TRANSITION

Performance	Throughout the region, there are strategies to support the transition of students from school to school. Students spend a day in their upcoming grade, visiting teachers and classes. In addition, special education students with specific grade to grade transitional needs are addressed through student-centered activities.	Interview	
Compliance	At this time, Newport County Regional Special Education Programs offers transition to work, transition services and Life Skills Programs to a limited number of students. All high schools in the region have participated in the RITIE Transition Improvement Grants, and significant improvements have been noted in the past three years. Although efforts have been made to expand these services, many students do not participate in the district transitional school to career services. Coordination of services with various initiatives (i.e., school to career classes, jobs for Ocean State graduates, work study, service learning, etc.) would enhance opportunities for special education students.	Observation Interview	
Performance	There is no formalized regional policy or procedure in place for vocational assessments at the middle school and high school level. Completion of vocational assessments varied from school to school. Coordination with adult service agencies for transition is inconsistent across the region.	Interview	The Newport Regional Program will develop policies and procedures related to vocational assessment and transition. Timeline: October 2001

12. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Performance	There appears to be a positive relationship between schools and families. There is active parent involvement in the schools including volunteerism, planning on school improvement teams and meaningful communication between schools and homes.	Interviews Document Review	
Performance	The Preschool Special Education Classes at Linden School have developed partnerships with the families through a home visit program. This program provides service coordination and information to support families involvement in their child's development.	Interviews	
Compliance	No indication parent received LAC information.	JDS1,2,3,4; JK1-5; DA1,2,3,4	The Newport County Special Education Program will provide assurances that parent receive LAC information in compliance with the RI Special Education Regulations. Timeline: September 2001

Compliance	<p>The Newport County Regional Special Education does not have a functioning local Special Education Advisory Committee (LAC). Several parents have organized with the Regional Special Education Office some educational forums for families, along with an annual recognition program. However, there is not an appointed advisory committee that assumes the functions and responsibilities of the LAC.</p> <p>A separate special education parent group has organized themselves in Tiverton as the Resource Council and has made some significant impacts in the district. This group successfully initiated an after school program for elementary students. Members of these groups are participating on the District Strategic Planning Committee.</p>	Interview	<p>The Newport County Special Education Program will provide assurances that there is a functioning local Special Education Advisory Committee in compliance with the RI Special Education Regulations.</p> <p>Timeline: October 2001</p> <p>Rhode Island Parent Information Network will provide support and technical assistance in this area.</p>
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13. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INDICATOR	FINDINGS	DOCUMENTATION	SUPPORT PLAN
Performance	Staff throughout the schools reports many opportunities for professional development offered through the districts and the East Bay Educational Collaborative.	Staff Interview	
Performance	Collaboration between general and special education staff in some schools provides effective, on-going, job-embedded professional development and supports the growing capacity of these schools to be responsive to diverse student needs.	Interview	
Performance	Gaudet Middle School has a special education teacher who recently received her National Board Certification. She is the only special education teacher in the County to receive this certification.	Staff Interview	
Performance	Middletown has developed a system of comprehensive professional development to support the school reform efforts that includes built-in initiatives.	Staff Interview	
Performance	Tiverton and Portsmouth School Districts extended professional development hours through the teacher's contract. The School Improvement Teams must approve individual teacher requests for attending workshops, conferences, etc., to ensure that these professional development experiences are aligned with the school reform efforts.	Interview	
Performance	Region-wide the elementary and middle schools are implementing the KITES Science Programs. Materials and teacher professional development are provided by the East Bay Educational Collaborative.	Interview Observation	
Performance	East Bay Educational Collaborative is providing professional development to all schools in the region through the Focus School Initiative.	Interview	

	<p>Although there have been many opportunities for professional development through the district and the East Bay Educational Collaborative, staff reports limited professional development through the Regional Special Education Program. A comprehensive and sustained system of professional development that is linked to both district strategic planning and school improvement plans needs to be developed and implemented.</p> <p>Staff have stated the need for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDEA Regulations • Positive Behavior Supports • Teacher Support Teams (TST) • Extended School Year Services (ESY) Guidelines • IEP Training to Align with Standards • Alternative Assessments • Accommodating diverse learners • Adolescent mental health • Differentiated learners • Other opportunities as described in SALT Survey Reports • Transition and vocational assessment 	Staff Interview	<p>The Newport Regional Special Education Program will provide ongoing professional development in these areas. The Regional Programs will coordinate these with the district offerings of professional development. A committee will be organized with representation from all districts to design a professional development plan.</p> <p>Timeline: December 2001</p>